



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 16, 2012

By: Spc. Balinda O'Neal

Alaska National Guard rescues two near Mystic Pass

CAMP DENALI, Alaska— The Alaska Air National Guard rescued an injured pilot and his stranded passenger approximately 120 miles northwest of Anchorage near Mystic Pass Wednesday afternoon and safely transported them to a Fairbanks hospital.

According to the 11th Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (RCC), Alaska State Troopers received notification of a downed aircraft that crashed on landing while the pilot was attempting to pick up his passenger. The injured pilot called his wife via satellite phone, and she was able to relay a message to Troopers. The Troopers then contacted the RCC at 2:32 p.m. to request assistance with the mission.

The RCC alerted the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th Rescue Squadron, Detachment 1, along with the 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons, and following a situation brief, they launched an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter out of Eielson Air Force Base at 3:51 p.m. and a HC-130 Hercules airplane out of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson at 3:55 p.m.

The HC-130 was first on scene at 4:53 p.m., and the HH-60 helicopter followed 13 minutes later.

"The HC-130 located the crash site, established contact with the injured pilot and received a description of the injuries," said Master Sgt. Sal Provenzano, 11th Air Force RCC noncommissioned officer in charge. "The HC-130 transmitted this information back to the helicopter, which allowed them to prep for the injuries and head straight to the crash site."

Guardian Angels from the Alaska Air National Guard promptly began operations by lowering pararescuemen via hoist onto the scene.

According to the RCC, the pilot, who was suffering from a fractured pelvis, was hoisted onto the HH-60 helicopter. The pilot's passenger, who had been waiting on the ground for the pilot to arrive before the crash happened, reported no injuries but was also transported along with the pilot to the hospital.

The HC-130 refueled the HH-60 at 6:05 p.m. before arriving at the hospital. The HH-60 crew reported that the patient and passenger had been delivered to the hospital and the helicopter was back at Eielson Air Force Base at 6:30 p.m.

"This is just another example of the Air National Guard team all coming together to help Alaskans, while at the same time fulfilling a deployment mission overseas," said Provenzano speaking about some members of the Alaska Air National Guard's rescue squadrons who are currently deployed to Afghanistan on combat search and rescue missions. "We are saving lives here and over in Afghanistan."

The Alaska Air National Guard's 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons were awarded two saves for this mission.

###